HALF TONE SECTION

THE OMAHA SUNDAY BEE

Advertise in THE OMAHA BEE Best in the West

VOL. XXXVI—NO. 16. OMAHA, SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 7, 1906. SINGLE COPY FIVE CENTS.

AROUND THE WORLD WITH WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

The Great Commoner Finds King Edward to Be a Charming Fellow, with a Leaning to Peace, and Gives His Impressions of the Leaders of Great Britain's Political Life

PARIS, Aug. 13.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—Great Britain has recently experienced one of the greatest political revolutions she has ever known. The conservative party, with Mr. Balfour, one of the ablest of modern scholars, at its head, and with Mr. Chamberlain, a powerful orator and a forceful political leader, as its most conspicuous champion, had won a sweeping victory after the Boer war, and this victory, following a long lease of power, led the conservatives to believe themselves invincible. They assumed, as parties made confident by success often do, that they are indispensable to the nation, and paid but little attention to the warnings and threats of the liberals.

One mistake after another, however, alienated the voters and the special elections two years ago began to show a falling off in the conservative strength, and when the general election was held last fall the liberals rolled up a majority of something like 200 in the House of Commons. A new ministry was formed from among the ablest men of the party—a ministry of radical and progressive men seldom equalled in moral purpose and intellectual strength. My main purpose in visiting London at that time was to become acquainted with the personnel of the new government and learn of their program.

Before speaking of the ministers, just a word in regard to the king, who is the head of the government whether it be liberal or conservative. The government of Great Britain is always in harmony with the House of Commons, and as the ministers speak for the king he does not emphasize the virtue of consistency, for he may be put in the attitude of advocating a thing today and opposing it tomorrow. He is not expected to have opinions upon public questions, or, if he has them, they are always presented with the understanding that if the ministers will not adopt his views he will adopt theirs. It is much easier to be a king now that it used to be, and the burdens of a monarchy have been very much lightened in the nations which, like England, recognize the omnipotence of Parliament.

I was very glad to avail myself of the opportunity offered by a private audience to meet his majesty, King Edward, and to be assured of his personal interest in the promotion of peace. The king has a very genial face and makes his visitor feel at ease at once. He has a knowledge of world politics and by his tact and good nature has done much to promote cordial relations between his own and other countries. It may not be out of place to correct an impression that has gone abroad with regard to the style of dress required of those who are admitted to the presence of the king. Because knee breeches are worn at court functions many have understood, and I among them, that they were required on all occasions;, but this is not the case. Most of the calls made upon him informally are made before dinner, and the ordinary black coat is worn. The requirements are not as strict as they are in Russia, Japan and Sweden, where I was advised to wear an evening suit for a morning call.

C.-B. a Humorous Democrat

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, a sturdy Scotchman, is the new prime minister, and those who know him intimately feel that his selection is a vindication of the doctrine that patience and courage, when joined with merit, are invincible. He is now well advanced in years and during his entire public career has stood unflinchingly for democratic ideas. He has not been discouraged by the fact that he has often been in the minority; on the contrary, he has felt as confident in his position when he has had to maintain it amid taunts and jeers as when his speeches brought forth applause. He is not as great an orator as Gladstone, but he has a very persuasive manner, and his fine sense of humor gives brilliancy to his speeches.

In outlining the policy of the liberal party last December he credited the victory at the polls to several causes—the tariff question, the Chinese question, the educational problem and municipal questions. He pledged his party to certain reforms and boldly advocated a reduction of military and naval expenses. He pointed out that there could be no retrenchment in taxation if the appropriations for armaments and for armies continued to increase. He has been called a "little Englander," but that did not deter him from uttering a protest against the rivalry which seems to be going on in Europe in the building of warships.

In view of his utterances in favor of arbitration and against militarism, it was most appropriate that he should deliver the address of welcome at the recent session of the Interparliamentary union, better known as the Peace congress. His speech on that occasion was an epoch-making deliverance. In no uncertain tones he threw the influence of his ministry on the side of peace and opened the door for the adoption of a far-reaching proposition in favor of the submission of all questions to investigation before hostilities are commenced. He used the North sea incident as an illustration and urged the extension of the powers of the board of inquiry. His now famous exclamation: "The Duma is dead—long live the Duma," illustrates both his moral courage and his devotion to representative government. The sentence was a part of his Peace congress speech and was uttered in the presence of the Duma representatives, who left Russia before the proroguing of that body. It electrified the audience and has been widely commented on throughout Europe.

Few premiers have had so large a majority back of them or possessed so fully the confidence of their supporters, and the program prepared by the ministry is a most comprehensive one. It is too much to expect that the liberal majority can be maintained on all the questions which will be under discussion, but it is evident that the new government will have a number of important reforms to its credit when it finishes its work.

Other Members of Cabinet

The president of the House of Lords, the lord chancellor, is one of the most popular of the liberal leaders. His name is Robert Reed and he is also a Scotchman. He is rare combination and one of the most lovable of men. There is a striking resemblance between him and the Edinburgh statue of Walter Scott, and in his heart there is the democracy of Burns. With high ideals, an eloquent tongue and a disposition which attracts men to him, he is especially fitted for public life, and it is to be regretted that upon retirement from his present position he becomes a judge, for the bench does not afford an equal opportunity with the forum for the moulding of public opinion.

The foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, is a man who would attract attention anywhere by the strength of his face. He reminded me of the late William Evarts of New York. He played an important part in the campaign which led up to the liberal victory and his selection was regarded as a fitting one. His position, however, is not difficult to fill, because Great Britain's relations with the other powers are quite amiable.

We extended our stay in London in order to hear the minister of war, Mr. Haldane, make his argument in favor of the reduction of the size and cost of the army. By the courtesy of our ambassador, Hon. Whitelaw Reid, I had an excellent seat in the gallery of the House of Commons.

The reader may be interested in a brief sketch of this most ancient of parliaments, and most powerful of all the factors which enter into the political life of the British isles. The hall will only seat 60 per cent of the members—an astonishing fact to an American, who is accustomed to see each of his senators, congressmen and state legislators with a seat assigned to him for the session. The members who are present sit on cushioned benches, resembling church pews, and these benches rise one above another on either side of the hall. The liberals sit on the right of the speaker and the front bench is reserved for the ministry. The conservatives occupy the benches at the speaker's left, the front bench being reserved for the leaders of the opposition. On the left, but farther from the speaker, are the Irish members and the labor members. There is a narrow gallery on each side which is occupied by members when there is a large attendance, and a small gallery in the rear for visitors. The ladies' gallery is just over the speaker's desk, and is so carefully screened that the occupants of the gallery cannot be recognized from the floor. While no one, least of all the women, seems to defend this screen, it still remains. Most of the members wear their hats in the hall, but as they have no desks they cannot write when a colleague is speaking, although I was told of one member who occasionally occupied his time knitting.

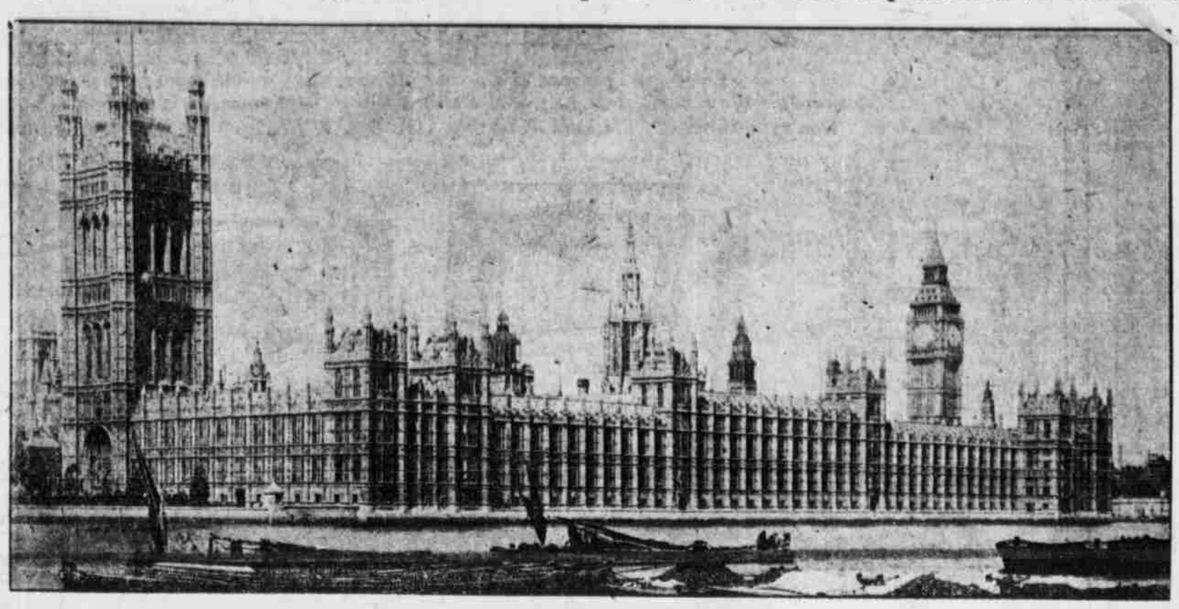
As Parliament virtually selects the ministers, and as these ministers are responsible to Parliament rather than to the king, they must attend the sessions at stated times and answer questions. Any member of Parliament is at liberty to submit a question in writing, and the minister is obliged to give answer, provided, of course, answer would not make an improper disclosure.

The leaders, facing each other from the opposing benches, present a very interesting picture, and after listening to the discussions back and forth one can understand why free speech has had so large an influence in the development of the political institutions of Great Britain. Here every idea is threshed out and every measure moulded into permanent form.

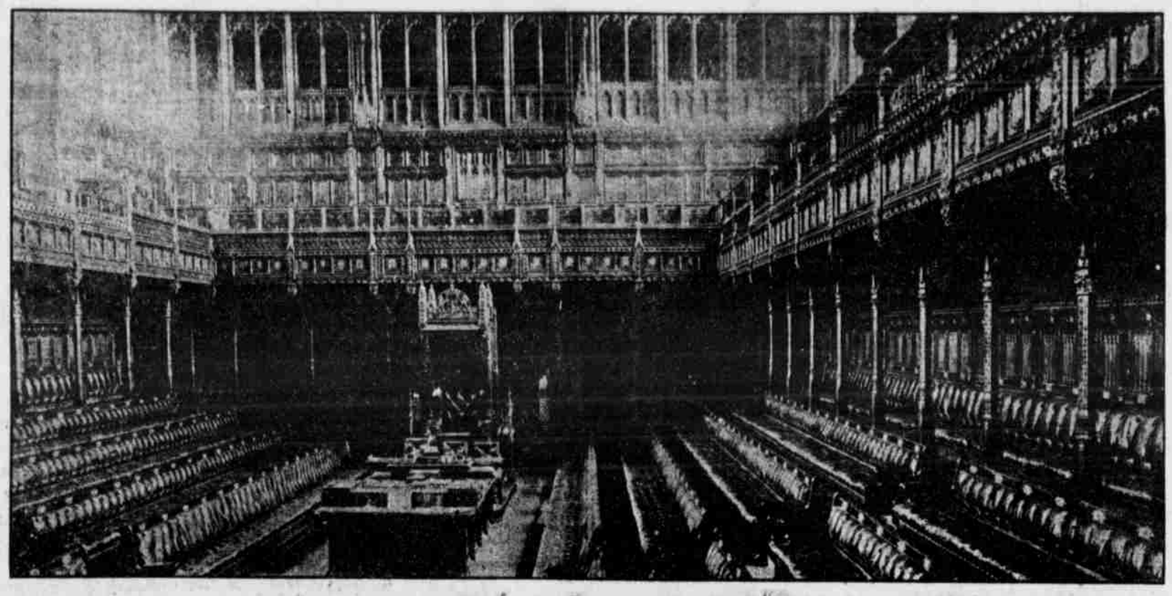
But to return to the minister of war. Mr. Haldane might be taken for Tom L. Johnson, Cleveland's redoubtable mayor, so much is he like him in face and figure. He is plausible in speech and so good natured that no one can be angry with him, however much he may dissent from his conclusions. For two hours he held the attention of the House and gallery—an unusual feat in London, where the speeches are not so long as in America. He was frequently encouraged by cries of "Hear! Hear!" the usual applause in the House of Commons. It was noticeable that the heartiest responses were drawn forth by his expressions in favor of peace and arbitration. The reorganization scheme which he presented provides for a reduction of several thousand men and a considerable decrease in the total cost, but to make the scheme more acceptable the remaining regiments are so disposed as to give the country a larger fighting force than it now has. It was interesting to watch the opposition benches, whose leaders vigorously attack everything that the new government proposes. Ex-War Minister Foster followed Mr. Haldane and picked flaws in his plans, but did not receive the attention accorded the war minister.

The army question is arousing considerable interest, and the government bill is likely to have more opposition in the House of Lords than in the Commons. In fact, Lord Roberts has already attacked the bill in advance in a speech which affords conclusive proof of the tendency of man to magnify his own calling. Nothing better illustrates the conservatism of the House of Lords than the fact that the liberal party can claim but one-tenth of the membership of that body, while it has 200 majority in the popular branch of Parliament. It must not be supposed, however, that all the bills passed by the House of Commons will be defeated in the House of Lords, for while a large majority of that house may really oppose a measure they recognize that the very existence of their body would be jeopardized if it opposed the people on any important question. Nominally, the House of Lords has an equal voice with the House of Commons in the enactment of laws, but as a matter of fact it does not dare to exercise the power which it has.

The Navy department has reduced the appropriation for large vessels, and it is certain that at the next Hague conference Great Britain will be found supporting a proposition for the limitation of armaments. Mr. Edmund Robertson, the financial secretary to the admiralty, presented the government's scheme for reduction and made a favorable impression upon the House of Commons.



PARLIAMENT HOUSE, LONDON.



INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Education and Religion

The minister of education, Mr. Birrell, has been the busiest of the ministers so far. He has had charge of the education bill which has been under discussion for several months and which, after being perfected in the committee of the whole, has been passed to a third reading by a majority of 192. As the bill deals with religion as well as education, and concerns the children of the country, it arouses deep interest. In England the public school system has grown up as an addition to the church schools, or rather the public schools have supplemented the work formerly done by the private schools. As these schools increased in numbers and importance the church schools began to ask for a division of the school funds, and this, as it usually does, brought into politics the question of religious instruction in the schools. As long as the private schools were supported by private contribution or endowment their religious instruction was entirely in their own hands, but when these schools began to draw their support from the public treasury the taxpayers objected to paying for instruction in the creed of any other church than their own. Four years ago the conservatives enacted a law which gave to the established church of England considerable advantage over the nonconformist churches in the management of the public schools, and this led to a campaign against the law by the nonconformists. Their opposition to the conservative government contributed not a little to the liberal victory and the bill now under consideration in Parliament puts them upon an equal footing with the members of the established church in respect to schools and removes the tests which formerly operated against nonconformist teachers.

Mr. John Morley, the secretary for India, is too well known in America to require an introduction. He stands in the front rank of English men of letters and his appointment has given new hope to the people of India. In presenting the Indian budget a few days ago he promised a reduction of taxation, especially the detestable salt tax, and said that a commission was inquiring how far the doctrine of self-government could be applied to the people of India. The fact, however, that but a few hours were devoted to Indian affairs while days and weeks are given to home problems shows how far the interests of citizens are placed above the rights of remote subjects.

Mr. James Bryce, the secretary for Ireland, is also well known in the United States, his "American Commonwealth" being a standard work among us. He brings to his duties wide experience and a splendid mind and, what is more important, an excellent heart. His sympathies are broad and he has enough Irish blood in his veins to insure an equitable view of Irish problems. The prime minister made an excellent selection when he named Mr. John Burns as president of the local government board. In this position Mr. Burns has to deal with the subjects to the study of which he has devoted his life, namely, labor and municipal affairs. Having worked his way up from the ranks, he is able to give invaluable assistance in all matters pertaining to wage-earners, factory inspection and municipalization. He is a tower of strength to the liberal ministry.

Winston Churchill's Work

Mr. Winston Churchill, son of the late Lord Randolph Churchill, as the representative of the colonial department in the House of Commons, has to deal with the Chinese question in South Africa, one of the leading questions of the recent campaign. The new government has undertaken to abolish a system of contract labor which has been described as little short of slavery. The mine owners insist that Chinese labor is necessary for the successful working of the mines, and the conditions imposed upon the Chinese are not severe, but the laboring men of Great Britain are quite unanimous in their condemnation of the system, and the liberal government is supporting their views. Mr. Churchill is a brilliant young man and has, as his friends believe, a bright future. The fact that his mother is of American birth gives him a more than usual interest in our country and makes us watch his career with a friendly eye. His connection with the important work of framing a constitution for the Transvaal is likely to largely increase his political prominence..

I have left for the last the chancellor of the exchequer, although in order of importance his office stands near the head of the ministry. Mr. Henry Asquith, the present occupant of this position, is one of the strongest members of the liberal party, and probably its foremost debater. He was put forward to reply to Mr. Chamberlain in the tariff controversy and acquitted himself well. He is opposed to the protective tariff, whether levied for the aid of particular industries or as a part of the scheme of retaliation, and his ideas are, for the present at least, in the ascendancy. If the Right Honorable Joseph Chamberlain, with the prestige given him by the Boer war and with his extraordinary ability as a public speaker, cannot overthrow England's free trade policy there is little chance that any other English statesman will be able to attack it successfully in the near future.

Mr. Asquith's department has the administration of the income tax and the inheritance tax. The latter has yielded more within the last year than ever before, three large estates having turned into the treasury (or will do so) some $20,000,000. The income tax is not only a permanent part of the fiscal system, but a commission is considering whether a graded income tax should not be substituted for the present uniform one. (The tax is now uniform except that small incomes are exempt.)

Besides the measures above referred to, the new government is building homes for tenant laborers in Ireland, and proposes to so change the election laws as to reduce the landholders to one vote each—at present each landholder can vote in every district in which he has land. The government is also supporting a measure which protects the English tenant farmers in their improvements and in their rights to vote according to their own views, irrespective of the wishes of the landlord. The liberal victory was a victory for progressive, democratic ideas, and the new government is earnestly at work putting these ideas into the form of law.

W. J. BRYAN.

King Ak-Sar-Ben XII and Queen

MR. GOULD DIETZ.

MISS MARGARET WOOD.

AK-SAR-BEN festivities for 1906 closed on Friday night with the court ball at the Den. That great building, which has been the scene of so many gatherings of note, was never so brilliant as it was on the occasion of the ball of this year. All past experience contributed to make the function notable, and new ideas were offered that added to its general importance as a social affair. The gathering was a remarkable one from every point of view, comprising the chivalry and beauty of the realm, and bringing together for the closing cermonial function of the great festival those who are most interested in the material welfare of the state, as well as those who make up its intellctual and social life. The great event of the evening was the coronation of king and queen. This was made more than usually impressive, the program being laid out on ceremonious lines that would not have been amiss in a real monarchy, and yet were sufficiently democratic to retain the spirit of the occasion in perfect harmony.

The disclosure of the identity of the king and queen brought expectancy to an end, and the applause and homage paid the royal couple proved the popularity of the selection. Mr. Gould Dietz has been one of the most active and zealous of workers during his connection with the Ak-Sar-Ben board of governors and is one of the most popular of Omaha's young business men. His elevation to regal honors is not only a tribute to his real merit as a worker in the realm, but is also a recognition of his supreme qualities as a good fellow. No monarch was ever hailed with more of genuine zest than he.

Miss Margaret Wood, the queen, is one of the most eminently qualified for the place of all of Omaha's young women. Generously endowed by nature with personal and physical attractions, she is a most serene and gracious queen, bearing the honors of the position with modesty as well as majesty. Her selection, however it was arrived at, is a most happy one, and aids in maintaining the royal house of Ak-Sar-Ben at the eminence it has attained during a long line of successive occupants of the throne.